

// County Cavan Town and Village Revitalisation Plans

REVITALISATION PLANS

Prepared for County Cavan
26th September 2018 - Issue 02
FINAL

BALLYCONNELL



Gaffney & Cullivan Architects

CLIENT
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DOCUMENT DETAILS

Project Number 0173
Project Name County Cavan Town and Village Revitalisation Plans
Document Number 0120-REP-03-09
Path L:\03 Projects\0173 County Cavan Revitalisation Plans\03 Tyréns documents\02 Design\02 inDesign\04 Stage iii\03 Reports\09_Ballyconnell
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Issue	Date	Status	Author	Checked	Approved
01	18/07/2018	Draft	M Wood S Pearcy E Emmel	M Wood	A Reiter
02	26/09/2018	Final	M Wood R Horton	M Wood	A Reiter

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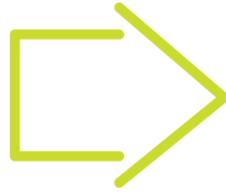
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PROJECT OVERVIEW



Cavan County Council has taken the lead in developing Town and Village Revitalisation Plans for 20 Towns and Villages across the County.

These plans have been developed in recognition of the importance of supporting and developing the physical and social fabric of these towns. The objective is to enhance our Towns and Villages as more attractive places to live and to work.

The plans are ambitious and will act as blueprints for the development and enhancement of our Towns and Villages over the next ten to fifteen years.

An integral part of the success of these plans will be the role that communities within the towns and villages take in leading out in their implementation in conjunction with Cavan County Council and other relevant bodies. Identification of a broad range of projects within the plans will enable communities to easily prioritise and develop project applications.

1. The Context for County Cavan Towns and Villages

Towns and villages play a key role in terms of serving the economic, social, cultural and community needs of the people and their hinterland. However, many towns and villages throughout Ireland are experiencing huge changes in terms of their commercial, aesthetic and cultural landscape. Provincial towns and especially provincial villages are under serious threat from the polarising effect of the larger city economies.

County Cavan is no exception to these changes. But while it shares the generic planning challenges that most provincial towns face such as out-of-town retail and residential development leading to dereliction of established town centres, Cavan County has also some very specific characteristics and needs. In particular South East Cavan due its proximity to the Greater Dublin Area has seen significant rise in population resulting in significant commuter numbers in some of the towns. In contrast parts of West Cavan, nested within pristine landscapes but in remote locations are suffering from population decline. County Cavan also faces challenges on account of its proximity to the border with Northern Ireland.

Within this context, as both the towns and villages experience huge changes across County Cavan, there is a greater importance placed on developing places that will be resilient and sustainable in the years and decades to come. In this context, County Cavan Council aim to harness local community and entrepreneurial spirit, in order to develop Revitalisation Plans for the towns and villages of Cavan.

2. Project Purpose and Outcomes

In September 2017, Tyréns UK and GCAL were commissioned by County Cavan Council to undertake the Town and Villages Revitalisation Plans project. The project will complement studies already undertaken by County Cavan and local Councils aimed at securing the long-term future of Cavan's towns.

The project encompasses the revitalisation of the following 20 towns and villages:

- Cavan Town
- Virginia
- Bailieborough
- Ballyjamesduff
- Cootehill
- Kingscourt
- Belturbet
- Mullagh
- Ballyconnell
- Ballinagh
- Ballyhaise
- Shercock
- Killeshandra
- Arva
- Kilnaleck
- Swanlinbar
- Butlersbridge
- Blacklion
- Lough Gowra
- Dowra

The purpose of this study is to prepare plans showcasing how improvements can enhance the town as an attractive place in which to live, play, work, and visit. The Revitalisation Plans will seek to enhance and improve town and village functions both on a day to day basis, while also seeking to improve the long term socio economic, cultural and environmental benefits for residents, businesses, communities and visitors.

The outcomes of the Revitalisation Plans are three-fold - to deliver successful strategies across spatial development, economic development and community development. The project will seek to ensure that the design of these town and village plans recognises the diversity that exists in the County of Cavan and will tailor each plan for the site specifics of each settlement.

3. Project Structure

The project has been structured as follows:

STAGE 1 - BASELINE

- Review of background material, reports, studies and strategies
- 'What makes Cavan - Cavan' engagement campaign
- County wide analysis
- Review of consultation findings

STAGE 2 - REVITALISATION PLANS

- Individual Town and Village Revitalisation Plans
- Consultation workshops

4. Objectives and Role of this Report

This report is one of a sequence of twenty reports providing a final summary of the proposals and proposals prepared as part of the County Cavan Towns and Villages Revitalisation project. This report is the final revitalisation report for Ballyconnell (town 9 of 20).

The report sets out a series of proposals focusing on spatial, economic and community development, establishing recommendations for implementation timescales. The proposals are action-based and spatially focused and provide an urban design and public realm framework to inform local planning policy and future development and/or regeneration proposals, covering place-making, open space, transport, parking, heritage, iconic features and vistas, natural environment etc.

The report also compiles findings from the community engagement. The current design for Ballyconnell is the result of a collaborative process with County Cavan Council, citizens, stakeholders and neighbours groups.

5. Project Deliverables

The following reports have been or will be delivered as part of County Cavan Town and Village Revitalisation Plans project documentation:

STAGE 1 - BASELINE

- Draft and Final Baseline Report - Site Analysis including SWOT analysis of each town and village and a County Wide analysis

STAGE 2 - REVITALISATION PLANS

- Draft and Final Individual Town and Village Revitalisation Plans

6. Project Programme

The early stages of the project - October 2017 to January 2018 - were dedicated to understanding the towns and villages context. During this period community engagement events were carried out as part of the 'What makes Cavan - Cavan' campaign.

Following this stage, from January to early February 2018, a County Wide Strategy has been prepared establishing a shared vision for County Cavan's towns and villages, identifying unique selling points, focus areas and themes for the Revitalisation Plans.

From February to May 2018, Revitalisation Plans have been prepared for each individual town. These plans have been supported by a series of workshops with the community.

7. The Tyréns and Gaffney & Cullivan Architects Approach

The GCAL and Tyréns team bring global thinking and local knowledge to the project. GCAL as Lead Architect bring expertise, extensive experience and considerable local knowledge of County Cavan. The practice specialises in built heritage which leads to proactive conservation architecture and renewal. Tyréns is a European multidisciplinary masterplanning, urban development and sustainable infrastructure consulting firm specialised in community and regional planning. The combination of Tyréns international experience coupled with GCAL's wealth of more local knowledge brings a unique perspective to the project.

Disciplines inputting to the project include urban design and planning, landscape architecture, transport and community capacity building. Working with the council's team, Tyréns and GCAL approach centre around people, their needs, their habits and their vision to inform the design of urban space. Tyréns and GCAL's goal is to activate factors that allow towns and villages to flourish as attractive places in which to live, work and socialise in.

INTRODUCTION



This report details the proposals aimed at revitalising Ballyconnell. It is structured in the following way:

Section A - County Wide and Town Specific Proposals

Section A of the report identifies and describes proposals that are recommended to be implemented both county wide and on a town-by-town specific basis.

The section begins by presenting County Wide Proposals (referenced as CWP) that are recommended to be rolled out in each town across County Cavan. The report continues to outline a series of potential Town Specific Proposals (referenced as SP) that are recommended to be implemented in specific towns and villages across County Cavan only. The town specific proposals will be relevant to only some of the towns, and will be explored with further clarity in each report.

Each proposal is also associated with a suggested priority rating and predicted cost. This assumption is based on findings from consultations and feedback from members of the public. Both ratings are represented alongside each proposal with the following icons:

Priority rating:

- High
- Medium
- Low

Cost rating:

- Standard Upgrade €0 - €25,000
- Standard Plus Upgrade €25,000 - €100,000
- Premium Upgrade €100,000 +

Section B - Belturbet Proposals

Following from this, the report outlines the proposals identified for Ballyconnell. Firstly, a map is used to illustrate the location of both the County Wide Proposals (CWP) and Ballyconnell Specific Proposals (BSP). On the map, each proposal encompasses a series of physical elements such as waste bins, lighting and seating etc. These items are identified by icons. These items are colour coded in reference to the key themes used in the Stage 1 framework to illustrate the challenges and opportunities affecting County Cavan's towns and villages. The themes are as follows;

1. Accessibility
2. Streetscape
3. Amenities and Services
4. Builtform
5. Initiatives and Events

Proposed themes and their associated icons are as follows;

ACCESSIBILITY

- Signage
- Maps
- Information Panel
- Bus Shelter
- Crossing Point
- Footpath
- Cycle Path
- Traffic Calming
- Car Parking
- Pedestrianisation

STREETSCAPE

- Planters
- Trees
- Tree surrounds
- Public Art
- Fountains
- Approach to town

AMENITIES

- Seating
- Outdoor Gym
- Playground
- River Amenity Space

BUILTFORM

- Street Façade / Building
- Road Surface
- Pavement Surface
- Kerb Finish
- Flexible Pavilion

SERVICES

- Waste Bin
- Drinking Fountain
- Charging & Wifi Station
- Lighting

Following the summary map, each proposal for Ballyconnell is detailed with supporting text, existing and proposed imagery or graphics.

Section C - Summary

In Section B, a table summarises all the proposals for Cavan and presents estimated costs and phasing.

Section D - Consultation Findings

A first draft of the proposals presented in this report has been subject to a public consultation which led to the revised and final suggestions of this final report. A summary of the process and findings of the public consultation can be found in Section D.



Crows Nest

Boyle Sports

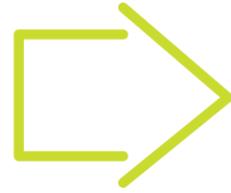
Boyle's

OPEN



SECTION A - COUNTY WIDE AND TOWN SPECIFIC PROPOSALS

COUNTY WIDE PROPOSALS



This section outlines recommended proposals to roll out in all 20 towns and villages across County Cavan. Proposals have been categorised into 'Standard', 'Standard Plus' and 'Premium' upgrades.

Many of the proposals suggested within these reports are recommended to be implemented in all of the 20 towns and villages involved in this study. It is important to consider these County Wide proposals at the scale of the county in order to create an integrated and seamless strategy, whereby items such as street furniture and wayfinding are uniform across multiple locations. Not only is this a cost and implementation benefit, but it will also strengthen the visual identity of Cavan as a County, to residents and visitors alike.

Proposals have been categorised as 'Standard', 'Standard Plus' and 'Premium' upgrades based on cost, together with an indicative priority rating for their implementation.

County Wide (CWP) 'Standard Upgrades' have been identified as:

- CWP1 Public Seating
- CWP2 Waste and Recycle Bins
- CWP3 Planting
- CWP4 Information Signs with Wifi/Charging Point
- CWP5 Paving

County Wide (CWP) 'Standard Plus Upgrades' have been identified as:

- CWP6 Approach Signage
- CWP7 Murals and Public Art
- CWP8 Electric Vehicle Charging Point
- CWP9 Walking Routes

County Wide (CWP) 'Premium Upgrades' have been identified as:

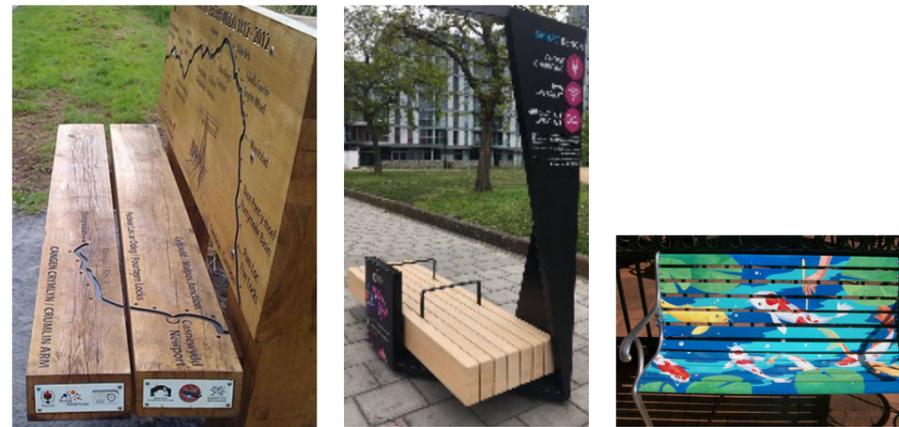
- CWP10 Façade Painting

Standard Upgrades €

CWP1 Public Seating

The first County Wide proposal is to provide upgraded and additional public seating throughout the towns. The design could incorporate the town's local history or natural assets by integrating the seat with an art installation, or simply repainting any existing public seating with vibrant imagery. The benches should be of a natural aesthetic (e.g. wood) and of a relatively traditional appearance in order to fit the local character of the area.

Seating could include benches and chairs that would allow people to rest and enjoy the public spaces. The seating should ideally be sourced from a local (County Cavan) carpenter(s) or furniture manufacturer(s) and therefore hopefully made from locally (and/or nationally) sourced materials. This will give the dual benefit for generating local employment/boosting the local economy and having a lower carbon footprint than importing from overseas. As a longer term option, introduce smart seating to key central spaces with integrated wifi, charging and information points.



TL: Sensitive and informative design, Brecon Beacons
 TM: Smart bench with charging, data collection and wifi hot spot
 B and TR: Benches painted by the local community

CWP2 Waste and Recycle Bins

Waste bins should also be sourced and fabricated locally. They should be made of natural materials where possible, and should aesthetically fit the local character of the area.

The bins should be secure to prevent theft and should have small openings to prevent people from using them to put their household waste in. Recycling bins should be implemented where possible without proposing bulky and invasive bins.



T: Modern waste bins
 B: Underground recycling bins



CWP3 Planting

In order to enhance the visual experience for both residents and visitors, a planting strategy should be implemented across all towns. Planting in the towns and villages could be landscaped using locally sourced stone to create a natural and local character. This character would also reference the topographical landscape of County Cavan. Planters could also be sourced and made locally using timber. They could also include built in planting elements, which could feature a diverse range of seasonal plants that can be enjoyed all year round.

Trees should be added throughout the town/village centres as they provide innumerable benefits to both the environment and residents. A good diversity of tree species should be used in order to create lush vegetation with a healthy flora environment. The introduction of tree surrounds double up as seating, and can be an easy way to create attractive landscaping to the urban environment. Permeable paving can also be used to allow the trees to capture run-off through the design of SUDS.



TL: Trees and seating create event and interaction spaces, Tullamore
TR: Property owners encouraged to use hanging baskets, Cornwall
BL: Trees along the street
BR: Tree surrounds, also acting as seating

CWP4 Information Signs with Wifi/Charging Point

A well conceived signage strategy featuring a combination of signs, maps and information panels is important to effectively inform both residents and visitors, and will create a legible and identifiable town centre. In addition to this basic wayfinding function, good signage will enhance the character of the town, reinforce the hierarchy of spaces and contribute to the streetscape aesthetics.

Design standards should be established and replicated across all signs to ensure they are consistent and complementary. Use materials that fit the character of the town, for example locally sourced timber, which is high in quality, durable and easy to maintain.

All towns across Cavan should feature a principal map with text indicating current location, landmarks, features, routes and other amenities. This principal map should be located on the main public square or similar high pedestrian traffic areas.

Public information panels provide users with more detailed information about their surroundings by explaining the significance of a specific feature or space. Information panels could be interactive or tactile to add interest and encourage use. The information signs could be integrated with wifi and/or charging points for mobile phones. Lighting poles, bus shelters, kiosks and benches can also be used to offer digital services and should be solar powered where possible.



TL and BR: Information Map
TR: Information Panel at a key landmark
TL: Information sign at a key location
BR: Interactive Information Panel

CWP5 Paving

Footpaths are a fundamental and necessary investment for all towns across the county. Often the main streets support high levels of vehicular traffic, and therefore pedestrian access and safety should be a priority. Well designed and maintained pavements encourage walking by making it safer and more attractive, but also support socialising and generate active streetscapes. Pavements should be provided on all urban streets, be accessible to all users and be uncluttered of unnecessary furniture. Pavement surfaces and kerbs should make use of locally sourced natural stone where possible.

Good quality footpaths should feature in the following zones:

- Buffer Zone (A) - should be of appropriate scale and delineated by vertical or horizontal separation - trees, kerb extension etc. - from traffic to foster a sense of safety for pedestrians.
- Street Furniture Zone (B) - sits adjacent to the buffer zone and is where street furniture and amenities should be located and aligned.
- Clear Path (C) - is the primary, dedicated and accessible pathway that runs parallel to the street. It should be at least 1.8-2.4 m wide to ensure that two people using wheelchairs can pass each other. It must be free of fixed objects and deformities that would make it inaccessible.
- Frontage Zone (D) - is at the edge between the clear path and buildings and should focus on how to make both attractive.



L: Pavement of the main street of a small town, with a landscaped buffer zone
R: Location and width of footpath zones as described above.

Standard Plus Upgrades € €

CWP6 Approach Signage

The various approaches to towns are critical to creating a strong and welcoming sense of arrival. Furthermore, as all towns and villages within County Cavan are located in rural areas with scenic views of the countryside, the approaches are sensitive spaces that can either support or be detrimental to the integration of the town into its surroundings. These approaches also signify a threshold, whereby the streets become less car oriented, more pedestrian and cycle focused in the town centre.

Bespoke signage should be introduced at the approach to the county itself and to each town and village. Signs should illustrate the location within the county, and could provide additional information such as population and an interesting unique fact. Towns should encourage the design of colourful planting and landscaping to the surrounds of the new signs to further enhance the arrival experience. An effort should be made to limit billboards.

CWP7 Murals and Public Art

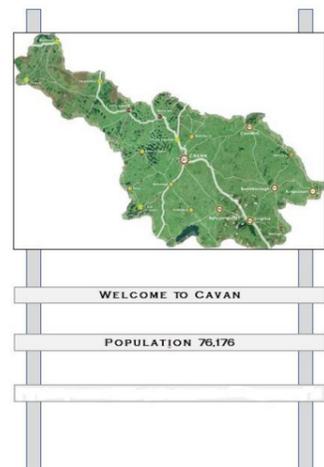
Public art is the most effective way to promote a town or village's individual character. Tourism will be encouraged furthermore through the marketing of local culture and art through social media platforms and the internet.

Various types of public art should be considered as part of an overarching strategy for each town and village. Ideas include; creative structures and pavilions, sculptures and street art, which should be designed for key public spaces.

There is existing public art in the form of street art and mural paintings across many of the towns and villages including Ballinagh, Swanlinbar and Kilnaleck.

CWP8 Electric Vehicle Charging Point

To encourage behavioural changes towards using more sustainable transport solutions, additional electric car charging stations should be provided across the county. These should be located at convenient and central locations to strengthen the benefits of having an electric car. Stations could be incorporated into lighting poles to avoid cluttering the streetscape with additional items.



TL: Proposed design of approach signage for County Cavan towns
TR and B: Welcome sign enhanced with colourful planting

T and BL: Example of murals referencing the local heritage of the town and created by the local community
BR: Existing street art in Ballinagh

E-car charging station



CWP9 Walking Routes

Each town should have a variety of walking trails in order to encourage residents and visitors to explore the built, natural and tourism assets as part of well signed routes. Trails could also include information panels at specific points of interest along the way.



Variety of sign design along countryside walks

Premium Upgrades €€€

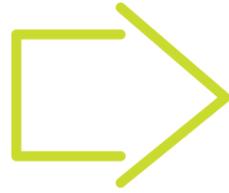
CWP10 Façade Painting

Well maintained and aesthetically pleasant street façades account for creating a welcoming and vibrant atmosphere in towns, and can also add to the character of the streetscape. This can be achieved through the implementation of a façade painting scheme, improvements to shopfronts and building frontages, or the commissioning of artwork murals, lighting schemes etc. Special treatment should be given to historic buildings that provide a special architectural, cultural or heritage value to the townscape. Landmark buildings that strengthen the identity of a town should also be well maintained and presented within the streetscape. Derelict sites should also be addressed, as they are often key spaces which could add to the character and experience of a town. Such schemes can be phased, by prioritising proposals at key locations, at entrances to town, at key nodes, and at areas around public spaces. Acting as a catalyst for future improvements, the upgrading of key sites and buildings will create maximum impact and encourage incremental changes across other parts of town.



Recent painting scheme in Mullagh

TOWN SPECIFIC PROPOSALS



This section outlines some possible proposals that will be specific to the towns across County Cavan. As within the County Wide section, proposals have been categorised into 'Standard', 'Standard Plus' and 'Premium' upgrades.

N.B: these proposals hold no priority rating as they are location specific. Priority ratings are summarise on page 32.

Standard Plus Upgrades €€

SP1 Street Redesign

Given that many of the 20 towns and villages are located along regional and local roads, through-traffic and parking are major issues experienced throughout County Cavan. These towns suffer from huge volumes of cars and industrial sized vehicles traveling along the main street. This makes for an unfriendly and dangerous pedestrian and cycle environment, that is often worsened by a lack of crossing points, narrow and damaged pavements.

Key street sections should be redesigned to create 'complete streets' that are safe and to be enjoyed by all users. Proposals could include new crossing points and refuge islands, cycle paths and associated facilities, high quality intersection surface treatment, contemporary lighting and street furniture that reflects the character of the area, shared surfaces where appropriate, traffic calming features and parking control measures. Road surfaces should be renewed when necessary to make streets both safer and more aesthetically pleasant. In particular, the use of different materials could reduce the reliance on road markings.



TL: Use of differentiated paving to strengthen the visibility of the crossing
 TM: Cycle physically separated from traffic on the main street
 BL: Shared surface
 R: Example of context sensitive lighting solution

SP2 Car Parking

Generally there is a good provision of parking across most towns and villages in Cavan. However many car parks and on-street parking could benefit from a redesign and/or realignment, enhanced with the introduction of landscaping, lighting and furniture.

Designated parking spaces for car users with disabilities should also be provided in every town and village across the County. These should be located next to key amenities with dropped kerbs to allow easy wheelchair access. Poorly designed disabled parking should be avoided: bays should not be fitted into leftover space but should instead be purposely designed from the start as part of a holistic strategy.



TL: Successful town centre car parking integrated with a landscaping scheme
 TR: The use of multiple surface materials to add texture and visual interest.
 BL: Disabled parking bay and sign, Ireland
 BR: Efficient car park layout with clear pedestrian routes and furniture.

Premium Upgrades €€€

SP3 Public Space

Improvements to existing the creation of new public spaces can activate and bring key amenities to previously lifeless towns. Plazas, squares and urban parks should be transformed into multi-use destinations, supporting a variety of civic and community uses including markets, events, seasonal programming etc. Public spaces are also spaces to rest, meet, interact and play, and should therefore incorporate seating, informal play items, canopies, landscaping and water features. The creation of new public spaces in the existing urban fabric can take advantage of building setbacks or wide roads. Community involvement in the co-creation of public spaces should be encouraged, as a way to foster a community's sense of pride and shared ownership of the town.

Public spaces could integrate flexible pavilions, which could trigger various uses and activities including pop up food stalls, amphitheatres for mini-concerts, performances, meetings, spaces to host yoga, cooking or meditation courses, offer of local services etc. Pavilions could also be made bookable by the local community in order to organise and host their own events. The design of pop up and transportable structures would also enable usage across multiple locations.



TL: Temporary activation of the public space
 TR: Pavilion dedicated to the discovery of urban gardening in Aarhus, Denmark
 B: Leyteire urban garden



SP4 Pedestrianisation

In the larger towns of the county, such as Cavan Town or Bailieborough, the pedestrianisation of some streets could be explored. Pedestrianisation can activate streets for new uses, foster interaction and encourage pedestrian movement. Overall, it makes the street more active, safer and healthier. It can also boost the local economy by generating higher footfall levels in retail areas.

In order for the concept of a shared or pedestrianised street to be well received locally, the proposal could be phased over time through small incremental measures. This could begin with pavement extensions, the creation of a shared street, the reduction of carriageways to single lane, the licensing of outdoor seating for cafés and pubs. Similarly, a short section of the road can be re-designed with space for a cycle track, large planters, trees, seating spaces and terraces. The community can also be encouraged to reinvent the public realm through the flexible and temporary programming of streets, such as events, street parties, markets, play streets, open streets, pedestrianisation one day a week etc.

These proposals will demonstrate the diverse ways in which a street may be utilised and may lead over time to more permanent transformations of the right-of-way.



T: A Parklet event - temporary pavement extension for amenity on parking spaces - and temporary street pedestrianisation, Hammersmith, London
B: Pedestrian Street in Boulder

SP5 Outdoor Gym and Playground

Playgrounds and outdoor gyms can inspire people to engage in healthy, active and outdoor lifestyles. They also serve as spaces to meet and socialise. To ensure high levels of use, they should be located near residential areas and be easily accessible by both pedestrian and cycle routes.

Playgrounds should be specifically designed for the space and context they sit in, and also make use of the available natural materials and planting. They should feature disabled friendly items and sensory rich equipment, encourage both ordered and informal play activities and support an assortment of games to appeal to different user groups. Such playgrounds should foster a sense of freedom, inspire creativity and boost the physical abilities of children.

Outdoor gyms provide public accessible places to train alone or in groups with numerous structures. Each gym should have its own character with an attractive design solution. The design should be versatile to allow users to develop their own exercises and for people of all fitness abilities to use and enjoy. In more rural areas, fitness trails could be a more appropriate solution.



T: Playgrounds in Oberhausen, Germany and New-York, USA
B: Outdoor gym in Brisbane and trim trail in Tom Ruana Park, Mayo, Ireland

SP6 River and Lakeside Amenity Space

Those towns and villages located near a river or a lake should aim to create amenity areas by the water for leisure, sport and recreation. These would positively contribute towards quality of life by providing an opportunity for all residents and visitors to access good quality open space facilities year round.

The range of activities offered could include: horse riding, cycling, picnicking, competitions, festivals, bird watching, nature trails, photography, orienteering, climbing, camping, swimming, boating, canoeing etc. Light structures such as a shelter or pavilion can facilitate the provision of a food and beverage offer and could facilitate scheduling events such as concerts and competitions. Legible pedestrian links from the amenity space to the town centre should be developed in parallel.

The promotion of the amenity value of rivers and lakes should be coupled with a strong focus on ecology by ensuring that developments do not disproportionately impact on the landscape and natural areas. The appropriate location, siting and design of proposed spaces will ensure that the natural resources which form the basis for recreation are protected and effectively managed.



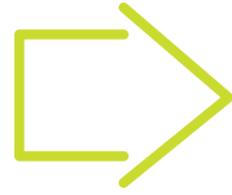
T: Amenity space for walking, resting, fishing and sport in Lünen, Germany and Annecy, France
B: River dedicated to swimming in Rostock, Germany





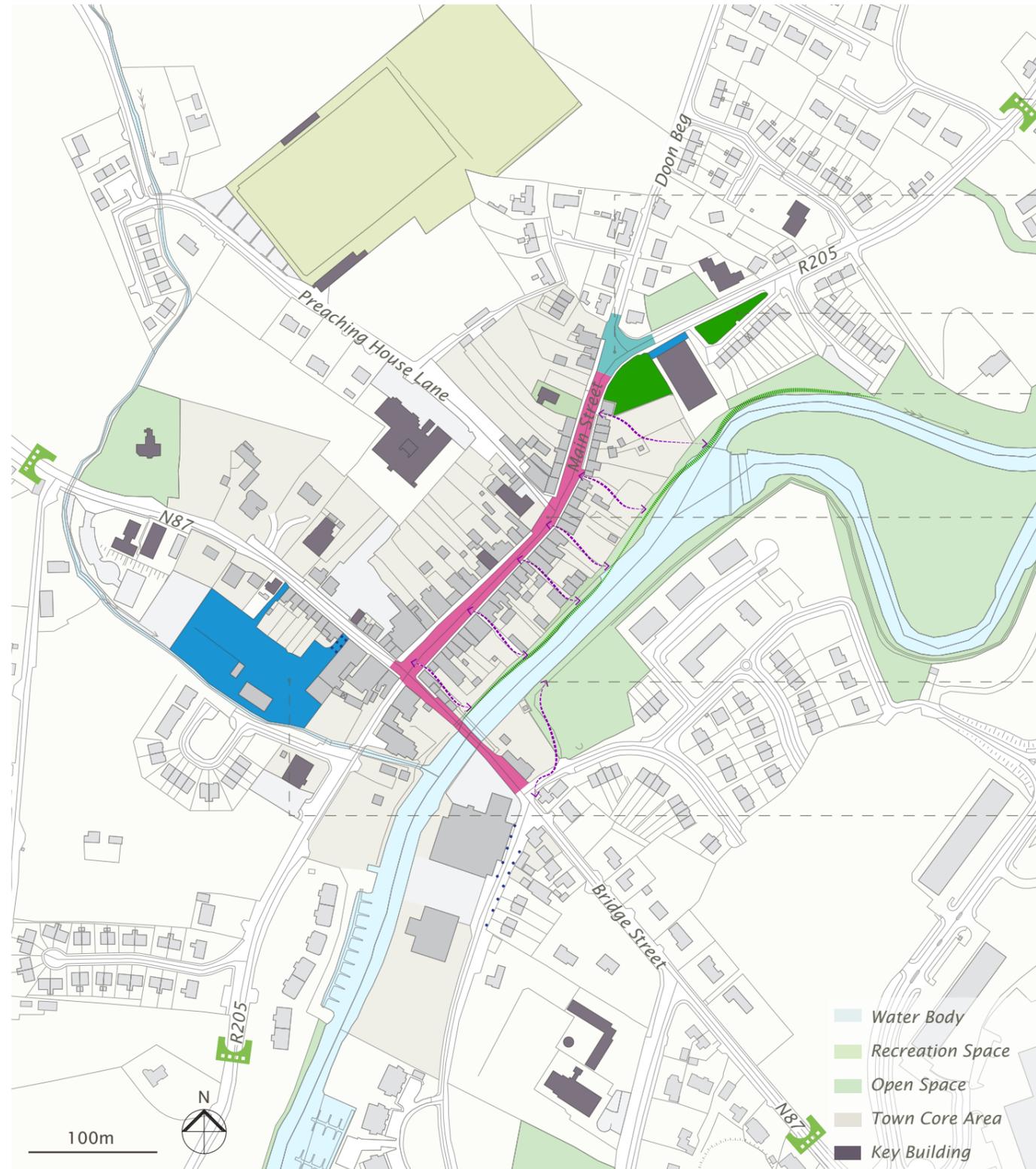
SECTION B - BALLYCONNELL PROPOSALS

PROPOSAL MAPS



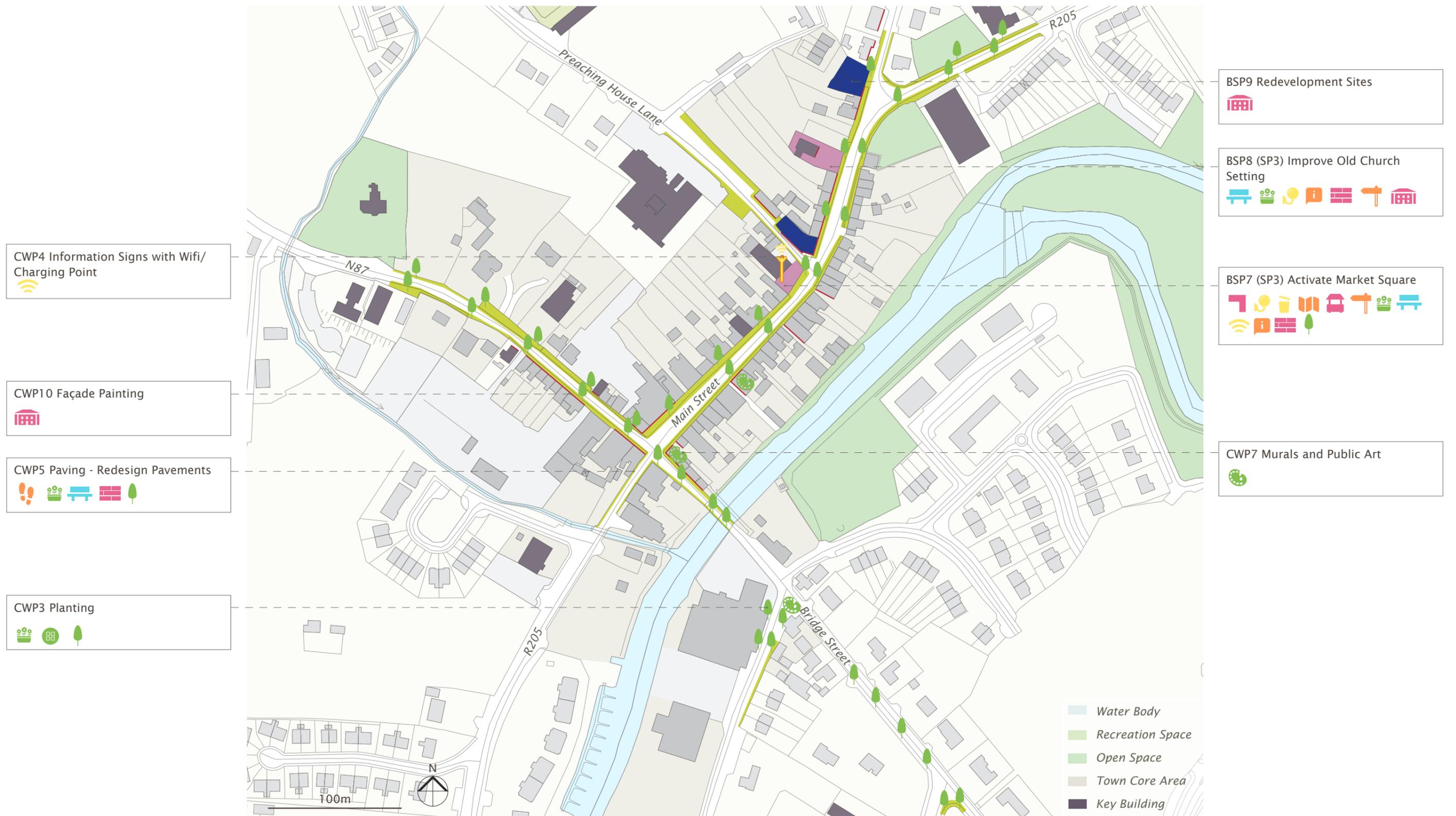
This section outlines proposals recommended for Ballyconnell.

* Please note:
 BSP - Ballyconnell Specific Proposal
 CWP - County Wide Proposal



- CWP6 Approach Signage
- BSP2 (SP1) Redesign of junction
- BSP6 (SP3) Amenity Spaces
- BSP1 (SP6) Promote Riverside Setting
- BSP3 (SP1) Redesign of Key Streets
- CWP5 Paving - Wayfinding to Key Assets
- BSP5 (SP2) Improve and Control Car Parking
 CW8 Electric Vehicle Charging Point

N.B
 CW1 Public Seating and CW2 Waste and Recycling Bins are to be located along key routes and at public spaces within the Town Core Area.
 Proposals relating to traffic, transport and parking alterations will be subject to a traffic audit and a detailed engineering design exercise.



County Wide Proposals

€ ● CWP1 Public Seating

In keeping with the county wide proposals, a key item to consider for upgrade or replacement in Ballyconnell is public seating. At present, seating is available only in Market Square and along the river. There is a lack of seating along key routes and other open spaces within the town centre. Additional provision would encourage pedestrian use and create a more active centre.

As illustrated opposite, the bench design should be durable, and resistant to long term weathering. The seating should be securely fixed to the paving, and be made of local and traditional materials if possible. Benches should be minimal in design, and allow for multiple views by the user by not having a structural back. New seating should be introduced as a priority along main roads and at key open spaces within the Town Core Area as shown on the proposals map.



Ballyconnell - existing: a bench on Market Square, one of the only public seating in town.



Proposed: above: durable public benches to be specified in multiple locations. Below: curved seating to be implemented in parks and open spaces.

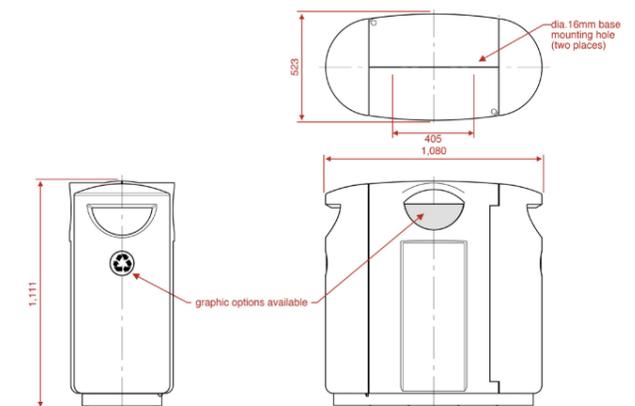
€ ● CWP2 Waste and Recycle Bins

There are not enough waste bins provided within the town centre, and where available, existing bins do not allow for recycling.

In conjunction with the county wide proposals discussed previously in this report, new combined recycling and waste bins should be positioned within Ballyconnell and across other towns in Cavan. New bins should be introduced as a priority along main roads and at key open spaces within the Town Core Area as shown on the proposals map. Having been designed with small openings, this will discourage misuse of the bins.



Ballyconnell - existing: waste bin on Main Street located in the middle of the pavement and disrupting circulation - no allowance for recycling.



Proposed: Cast Ductile Iron litter bin with 3 compartments; litter and recycling.

€ ●
CWP3 Planting

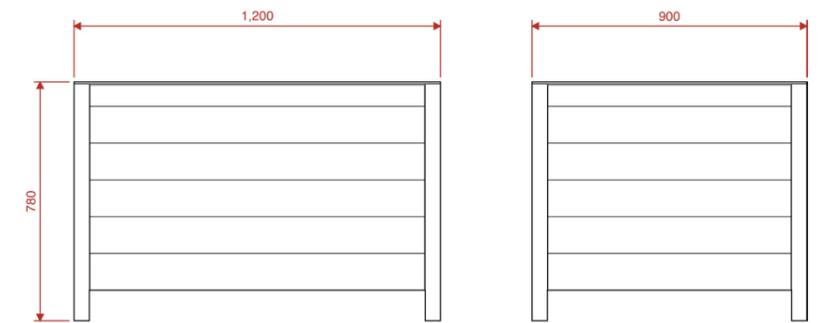
Currently, a few trees and planters can be found along the streets of the town centre in Ballyconnell. Most of the planters enhancing the public space are however, part of private properties.

Introduce more trees, planters and hanging baskets to add colour and vibrancy to the town. Planting would also serve to discourage on-street parking, improve the sense of arrival to town and enhance biodiversity levels. In this regard, native and diverse plant species could be used. Trees and planting should be located as per indicated in the proposals map.

Consider alternatives to overhead cables as these are detrimental to the aesthetics of the streetscape.



Ballyconnell - existing: a privately managed planter enlivening the public realm.



Proposed: durable wooden planters

€ ●
CWP4 Information Signs with Wifi/Charging Point

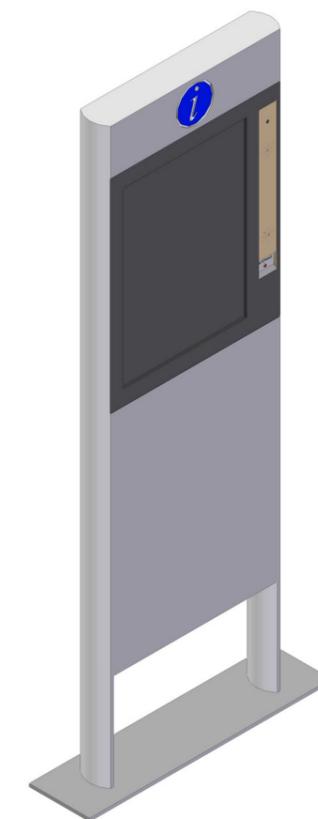


As per the county wide guidance, run down or missing signage within Ballyconnell should be replaced with newly installed information signs for all users, including pedestrians, cyclists and vehicle drivers.

The format, layout, colours, fonts and over all design should be in conjunction with signage found in all other towns within County Cavan. This should also include upgraded information panels which are clearly legible and provide information on the local area and events.



Ballyconnell - existing: information signs



Proposed: Interactive information panel



CWP5 Paving



The proposed altered traffic flow in town centre represents an opportunity to upgrade the quality and width of footpaths. Such a measure would create space for seating and landscaping and ease the pedestrian flow. In particular, on Bridge Street, R205, N87 and Preaching House Lane, new footpaths could be created on both sides of the street following the implementation of a one way traffic system. This would improve pedestrian access towards the town centre.

In a similar manner, consider improvements to permeability and wayfinding to the canal walks, outdoor amenities and built heritage assets, notably by enhancing existing laneways, by realigning the parking and introducing landscaping, furniture, and signage.

Consider the creation of a Heritage Trail safely linking key assets throughout town. Access to the towns built heritage should be further exploited through well placed and designed signage, landscaping and maintenance.



Ballyconnell - existing: narrow pavements on one side of the street only.



Proposed: use of local materials to create aesthetically pleasant and well designed pathways. Consider application of cobbles/textured grain to edges and thresholds.



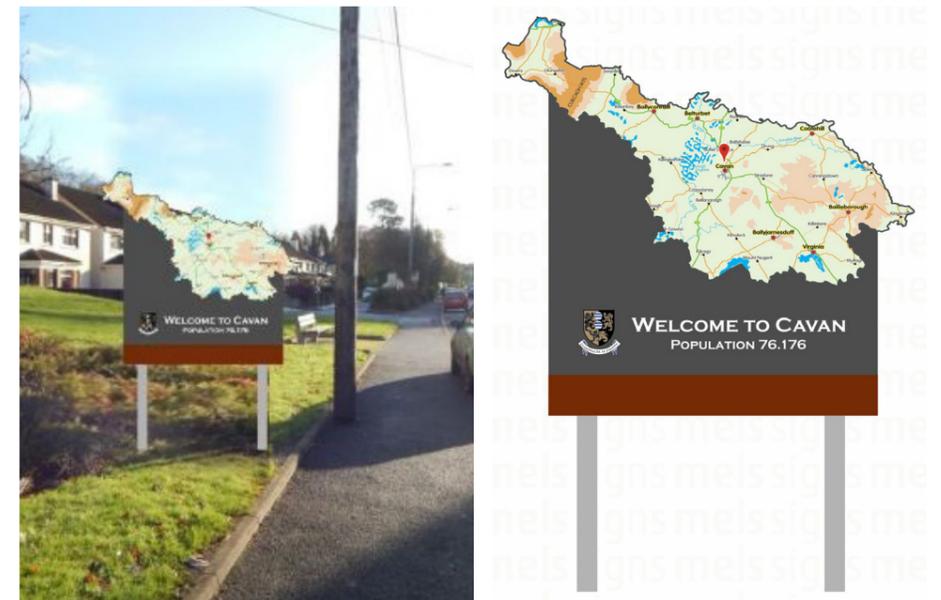
CWP6 Approach Signage



Introduce high quality welcome signage and colourful planting on approach roads to town, prioritising the primary vehicular routes: the N87 and the R205. Similarly, improve existing traffic calming measures and consider alternatives to the unattractive overhead cables.



Ballyconnell - existing: a lack of welcoming approach signs and unsightly overhead cables.



Proposed: use of county wide signage with local information and fact. (N.B information will be town specific in detailed design).



CWP7 Murals and Public Art



Consider the commissioning of murals by local artists or schools, in order to decorate key buildings along Main Street and Bridge Street. This would enhance the aesthetics of the streetscape, strengthen the identity of the town and improve the retail atmosphere. The design and implementation of a sculpture at the Bridge Street junction could help to further deter on-street parking.



Ballyconnell - existing: building façade lacking art installations.



Proposed: reinstate key buildings and façades with murals related to the town's features and heritage. (Ledwidge Mural)



CWP8 Electric Vehicle Charging Point



With an increasing number of electrical vehicles being used, towns should ensure that there is sufficient provision of electrical charging points. These should be located within close proximity to the town's retail street or key attractions. As per the proposals map, it is recommended that charging points be located within the existing car parks.



Ballyconnell - existing: no provision of e-car spaces in town.



Proposed: provide additional e-car charging points with designated parking spaces.

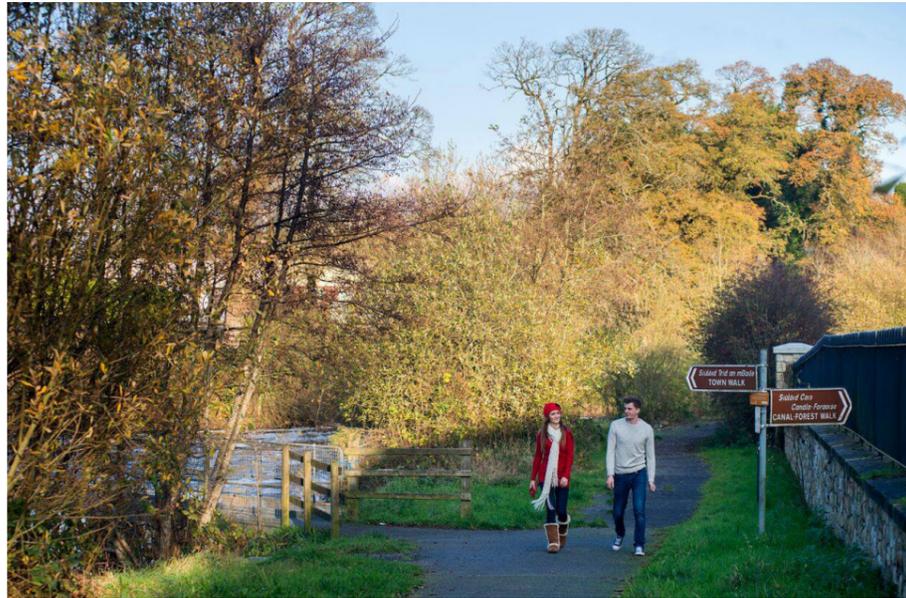


CWP9 Walking Routes



This study recommends the creation of three walking routes of different lengths - 1 km, 1.6 km and 2.5 km. The routes would take users around the town centre, and enable visitors to discover the key landmarks, views and natural assets of Ballyconnell. These walks would connect with the existing Woodford River walk. It is recommended that these walks feature interpretative and interactive signage materials.

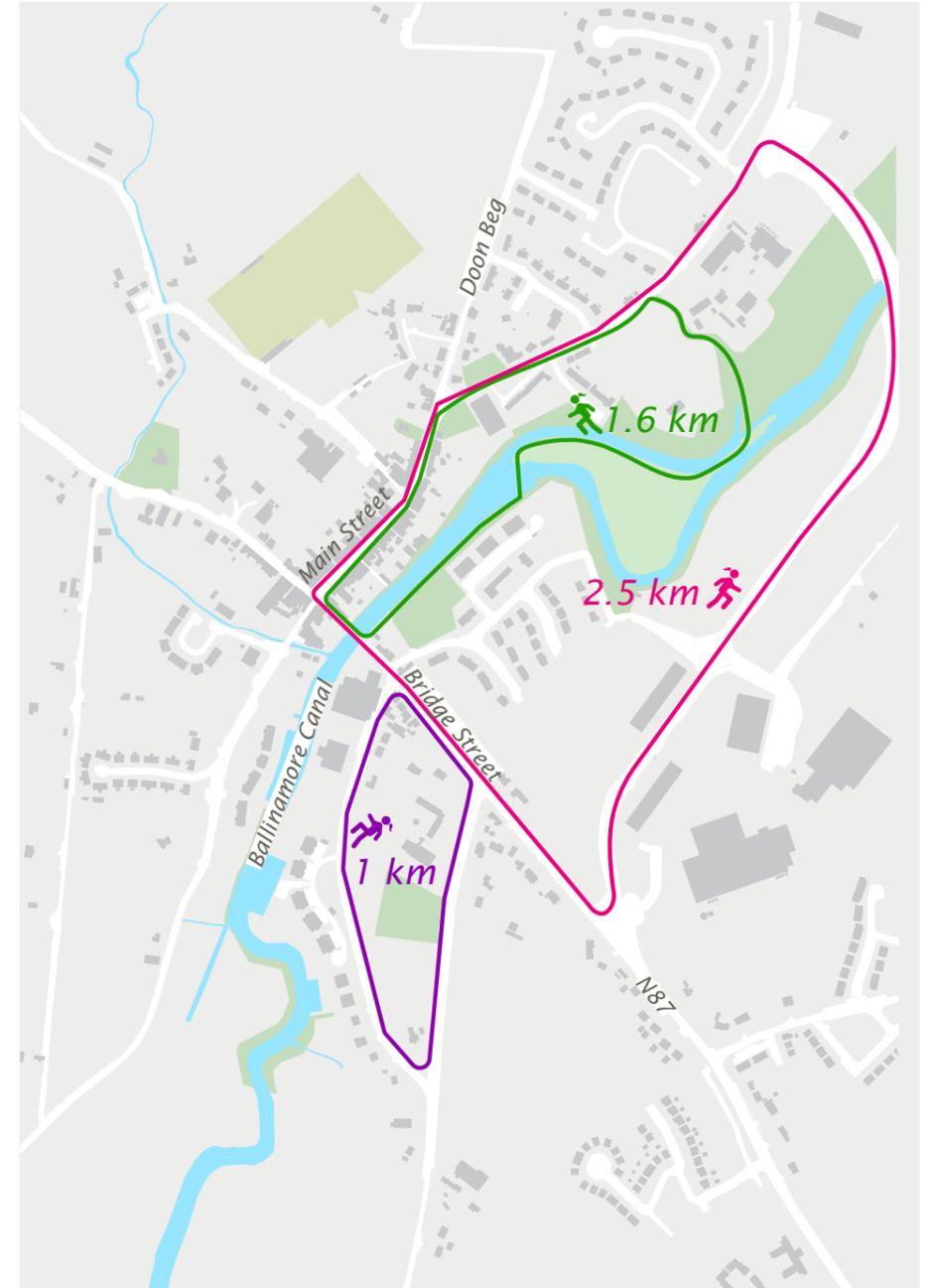
The above walking routes could further add to the proposed recreational trail to Bellaheady Bridge which is near completion. The Woodford River walk and the Ballyconnell to Bellaheady recreational trail are currently being developed along the river a distance of 5.5km.



Ballyconnell - existing: Woodford River walk.



Proposed: markers along the walking routes.



Proposed: Ballyconnell urban walking routes



CWP10 Façade Painting

Protect original shopfronts and encourage the uplifting of exhausted façades by promoting painting schemes and heritage grants. The key façades that are to be initially considered are identified in the proposals map.



Ballyconnell - existing: key façades in need of refreshment.



Proposed: encourage property owners to paint their façades with a set colour palette to create a bright and uplifted town centre.

Ballyconnell Specific Proposals (BSP)



BSP1 Promote Riverside Setting



Ballyconnell is located on the vibrant and picturesque Shannon Erne Waterway and is already highly regarded for its coarse fishing. At present, the canal can be explored by cruiser, boat and canoe. Further protect and enhance the scenic waterfront setting of the town, and consider the potential to develop a waterfront linear park, which could offer recreation, exercise and leisure opportunities, such as swimming or wildlife watching. To enhance biodiversity and protect wildlife on and around the waterway, introduce measures such as the renaturation of the embankments and the introduction of native plant species.

The Ballyconnell to Bellaheady recreational trail currently being developed along the river a distance of 5.5km is an example of such potential.



Ballyconnell - existing: riverwalk along the Shannon Erne Waterway.



Proposed: above: develop a waterfront linear park offering active and passive recreation opportunities to both residents and visitors.



BSP2 Redesign of Junction



At present the R205 and Doon Beg junction is poorly delineated, with vehicular lanes that are too wide, making it dangerous for pedestrians to cross. Taking advantage of the proposed altered traffic flow within town centre, redesign this junction to calm traffic and increase pedestrian space. This could be achieved by creating a roundabout, widening the footpaths and adding landscaping. Furthermore, as this junction will become the end of the redesigned one way Main Street, clear signage and traffic calming features should be introduced.

Any such proposals need to be carefully considered from a traffic design point of view and would be subject to detailed audit and design.



Ballyconnell - existing: dangerous and over dimensioned junction.



Proposed: redesign of the existing junction with the introduction of a roundabout, widened footpaths and new planting.



BSP3 Redesign of Key Streets

The existing configuration of Main Street and Bridge Street consists of wide carriageways, high speed traffic, parking on both side of the street and narrow pavements. This layout does not currently promote a safe and inviting environment for both pedestrians and cyclists. Similarly, the under-provision of pedestrian crossing points limits pedestrian mobility, which is detrimental to the appeal of the town centre as a place to meet and shop.

Consider the redesign of both Main Street and Bridge Street to calm traffic, give space to pedestrians and create lively streets. Carriageways should be reduced to one way traffic so as to allow for the widening of footpaths, the creation of a cycle lane connecting key amenities in town, and the introduction of planting, street furniture and crossing points.



BSP4 Proposed Altered Traffic Flow

In order to facilitate pedestrian flow, calm traffic and enhance the streetscape, carriageways could be reduced to one-way traffic on Bridge Street and Main Street. Such a measure could be trialled and be in effect only at certain times, such as during weekends or public holidays. Any such proposals need to be carefully considered from a traffic design point of view and would be subject to detailed audit and design.



Ballyconnell - existing: Main Street layout, with wide traffic lanes, car parking on both sides of the street and narrow pavement.



Proposed: take advantage of the proposed altered traffic flow to create a pedestrian and cyclist friendly street.



Ballyconnell - existing: Main Street layout with two-ways traffic.



Proposed: the creation of a one-way carriageway will allow for wider pavements and a pedestrian friendly public realm.



BSP5 Improve and Control Car Parking



Consider the redesign and layout of the car parks located on the R205 and R87 to maximise use of space and introduce planting. This would help relieve problems created by on-street parking, improve safety levels and enhance the streetscape. Similarly, visibility and access to all car parks throughout town should be improved in order to increase their use.

Along the road perpendicular to Bridge Street, pavements are often obstructed by parked vehicles, which is detrimental to pedestrians and cyclists. Bollards could be introduced to discourage parking on the kerb and encourage drivers to use nearby dedicated car parks.



Ballyconnell - existing: parking layout making poor use of the space and with unappealing aesthetics.



Proposed: enhanced car park layout, together with the introduction of planting and permeable paving.



BSP6 Amenity Spaces



Ballyconnell features a series of well maintained but under used green spaces in close proximity of the town centre. Transform these valuable open spaces into amenity spaces providing active and passive recreation opportunities to residents.

In particular, consider the creation of a pocket park by the community centre, with seating, landscaping, pathways and adventure play items. In Mount Easant Estate, improve the established green space by introducing planters and seating to better cater for residents and its encourage use.



Ballyconnell - existing: underused green space in close proximity of the town centre and residential developments.



Proposed: creation of a small pocket park providing outdoors recreation opportunities for nearby residents.



BSP7 Activate Market Square

Encourage greater use of the Market Square by implementing an integrated landscaping and seating strategy that could facilitate a series of events, whilst providing a gathering space during all other times. This will also help to better position the Market House as a key building within the townscape.

A flexible pavilion or covered area could also be created on the Market Square to allow the space to be used all year round. The pavilion could accommodate multiple activities and be built with local materials to strengthen the town's character.



Ballyconnell - existing: underused and poorly furnished Market Square.



Proposed: introduction of seating, planting and lighting to encourage greater social, civic and commercial uses of the square.



BSP8 Improve Old Church Setting

The Old Church is a key heritage building in town but is currently poorly maintained, and subsequently detracts from the aesthetics of the town. Consider uplifting the façade of the Old Church and to enhance its surrounding grounds through hard and soft landscaping improvements.

Other poorly maintained heritage sites should be uplifted in a similar manner by awarding grants to land owners. Well placed and designed signage in conjunction with the proposed Heritage Trail scheme should encourage visitors to stop by these sites and enliven the streetscape.



Ballyconnell - existing: derelict Old Church and surrounding grounds.



Proposed: uplift the façade of the Old Church and enhance its surroundings to attract visitors as part of a wider Heritage Trail.



BSP9 Redevelopment Sites

Encourage the upgrading of vacant buildings within the town core for residential use through the Action Plan for Rural Ireland. Underused buildings with good heritage value could also be regenerated for hospitality or retail uses relating to the Geopark.



Ballyconnell - existing: derelict building sited in a valuable town centre location.



Proposed: redevelopment of the site for hospitality and tourism uses.

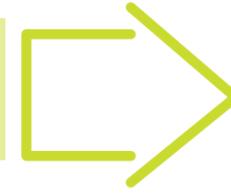






SECTION C - SUMMARY

SUMMARY



This table summarises the proposals for Ballyconnell and associated implementation timescales and costs.

PROPOSAL		NOTES	PRIORITY RATING	COST RATING
<i>County Wide Proposals</i>				
CWP1	Public Seating		Medium Priority	Standard Upgrade
CWP2	Waste and Recycle Bins		Medium Priority	Standard Upgrade
CWP3	Planting		Medium Priority	Standard Upgrade
CWP4	Information Signs with Wifi/Charging Point		High Priority	Standard Upgrade
CWP5	Paving		High Priority	Standard Upgrade
CWP6	Approach Signage		High Priority	Standard Plus Upgrade
CWP7	Murals and Public Art		Low Priority	Standard Plus Upgrade
CWP8	Electric Vehicle Charging Point		Low Priority	Standard Plus Upgrade
CWP9	Walking Routes		High Priority	Standard Plus Upgrade
CWP10	Façade Painting		High Priority	Premium Upgrade
<i>Ballyconnell Specific Proposals</i>				
BSP1	Promote Riverside Setting		High Priority	Premium Upgrade
BSP2	Redesign of Junction		Low Priority	Standard Plus Upgrade



PROPOSAL		NOTES	PRIORITY RATING	COST RATING
BSP3	Redesign of Key Streets		High Priority	Standard Plus Upgrade
BSP4	Proposed Altered Traffic Flow		High Priority	Standard Upgrade
BSP5	Improve and Control Car Parking		Medium Priority	Standard Plus Upgrade
BSP6	Amenity Spaces		Medium Priority	Premium Upgrade
BSP7	Activate Market Square		High Priority	Premium Upgrade
BSP8	Improve Old Church Setting		Medium Priority	Standard Plus Upgrade
BSP9	Redevelopment Sites		Medium Priority	Premium Upgrade

Cost rating:

Standard Upgrade: €0 - €25,000

Standard Plus Upgrade: €25,000 - €100,000

Premium Upgrade: €100,000 +



GUINNESS

GUINNESS

GUINNESS

MAGARRON

WIFI

Heineken

BRANDYWELL



SECTION D - CONSULTATION FINDINGS

CONSULTATION FINDINGS



This section presents the summary of the findings of the public consultation.

A draft of the proposals presented in this report has been subject to a public consultation which led to the revised and final suggestions of the present report. The proposals were presented and members of the public were invited to provide feedback as to which proposal they thought would be most likely to improve Ballyconnell, and which they thought were least likely to improve the town.

Only one person answered the questionnaire to rank the different suggestions. This person considered that the promotion of the riverside setting was likely to be the most effective proposal to improve the town.

Other members of the public answered the questionnaire only to propose additional suggestions for the town. These are illustrated on the map on the following page. These suggestions will be considered and incorporated as part of any formal proposals going forward.

Camping facilities needed



Proposals at Junction N87/Castleford to widen footpath won't work as lorries won't be able to turn



Post Office Building - needs to be reviewed



Upgrade Community Spaces throughout Town



SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS

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